

PATHWAYS

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No. 3

LISTENING AIDS THROUGH THE GRADES—2

Primary Grades

Encourage a comfortable sitting position and ensure as few distractions as possible. This will help even the beginner in school to listen. As the children grow more accustomed to listening, some of the following additional points may be brought out in discussion with the children: Watch the speaker. Be *with* the speaker. Be patient with any difficulty the speaker may have. Think of what is being said. Feel responsibility for helpful comments. Wait for your turn to comment. Place emphasis on *what* is said rather than on *how*.

As standards for good listening are developed, "good listeners" charts such as this may be made:

Good Listeners

1. Get ready to listen.
2. Think of what the speaker is saying.
3. Are ready to talk about what has been said.

1. What Kinds of Sound?

At the later primary level, as in kindergarten and grade 1, children still like to listen for sounds in the environment. However, now the games can go beyond mere identification to discernment of qualities attached to sounds. The pupils are asked not only to recognize sources but also to distinguish *loud, soft, near, far, high, low, harsh, and musical* tones.

2. Quiz Program

A quiz program may be used to encourage careful listening. Have the children talk about quiz programs and how they are carried out. Let them choose a master of ceremonies, a team or two teams to answer questions before a make-believe microphone, and an audience. Organize a committee to compose and write questions on slips of paper. The master of ceremonies will pull the questions out of a box and read them. Volunteers will answer them and scores may be kept. Encourage the children to speak clearly and to use complete sentences.

It is usually wise to limit quizzes to a particular topic. Questions may be prepared on the

stories in readers that have been read by the group, on other story books read orally by the teacher, or on such social studies topics as the community. As children develop their auditing abilities the written questions may be made longer.

I. Recognizing Whole Words

3. Word Pictures

After a story has been read once by the whole group, have books closed as one child reads a page of the story. Tell the children to listen for words that make them see a picture. After the page has been read, call on individuals for the words that gave them clear pictures. Write these on the chalkboard. Later some of the children may draw their own pictures of these words and phrases. Example: tall house, old shoes, round face, red dress, fat man.

4. Riddle Rhymes

Riddles are fun. Encourage the children to make up rhymes containing riddles. When a class gets into the swing of making up riddles, they produce all sorts. The teacher may open the game with a riddle like these:

I rhyme with "boy".	I rhyme with "hair".
You play with me.	You sit on me.
What am I?	What am I?

When the children are accustomed to the game the child who answers correctly first may make up and ask the next riddle.

5. Remembering Action Words

After the children have listened to a story or read one for themselves, have them list certain action words that help tell the story. For example, after one story the children may tell what each of the following words recalls to them about the story: "running", "barking", "rumbling", "jumped", "ran", "piled", "hiding", "raced", "waved", "fell". Call attention to the fact that each word tells about something that happened.

Have the children write or think of two or three other sentences which contain a good action word. When they read them orally or

say them a little later, the rest of the group should be able to pick out the good words. Examples: "The cat *crept* after the bird", and "He *stumbled* on the dark stairs".

6. Unstressed Words

Combine work in oral reading and listening by calling attention to the proper pronunciation of certain words when they are unstressed. In nine-tenths of our normal speaking such unimportant, inconspicuous little words as "the" "a" are passed over so lightly as to be almost ignored. It is following this natural pattern of easy, rhythmic speech that gives oral reading its pleasing, life-like quality.

Have the children listen while the same sentence is read twice: first giving every word equal stress, and then grouping the words in phrases and emphasizing only two or three words. Example:

We' went' over' the' hill' to' the' hunter's'
cabin.'

We' went over the hill' to the hunter's'
cabin

Write on the chalkboard some sentences containing words which are unstressed, and have the group plan how they would read them in easy, conversational tones. Start with sentences such as these:

The big brown bear caught a little fish in
the pool.

Up we go and down we go; the swing sails
through the air.

7. Careful Enunciation

Group together the children who need help in enunciating words clearly. Play an echo game. Say a word on which the group needs practice. (Records may be consulted for earlier notes on pronunciation problems.) Call on a child to repeat the word as an echo. If the child says the word correctly, he may take your place, say another word, and call on a classmate to repeat it.

8. Sound Alikes

The following sentences should be written

on the chalkboard:

Jane knew that her mother would bring her
a new dress.
The whole class saw the hole in the fence.
The eight boys were so hungry that they
ate all the food.

After the sentences have been read aloud, ask a child to underline the words that sound alike: "knew-new", "whole-hole", "eight-ate". Explain that there is a name for these words which sound alike, but have different meanings. They are called *homonyms*.

Write the words "bow", "to", "be", "deer" on the chalkboard. Ask for a word which sounds just like each of these. Let children volunteer to tell the meaning and spelling of each homonym as it is suggested. When the word pairs have been written on the chalkboard ask for volunteers to use each pair in a sentence.

9. Same or Different

Children may practice their word discrimination powers by telling whether two words pronounced by the teacher (or another pupil) are the same or different.

To make this a group game, the pupils can write the numbers from 1 to 15 and then put *S* or *D* beside the number of each pair as the teacher pronounces fifteen pairs once. Keep a record so results can be checked by the pairs again.

Pairs to be marked *S* ("same") are obviously pairs consisting of the same word pronounced twice. A few examples of "different" pairs are:

bag-back, bang-bank, beg-bag, boat-both,
chip-ship, day-they, dug-duck, eat-heat,
feel-file, fell-felt, lets-less, necks-next,
oil-earl, rode-wrote, singing-sinking, shoe-
chew, sleep-slip, tin-thin.

II. Rhyming Games

10. Rhymes

The teacher says two words at a time—"hard-lard" or "run-jump", for example. The

children stand up if they hear that the words rhyme. For somewhat more mature children the teacher says sentences:

This seed makes good bird feed.
Jack put his tools in the sack.
John likes meat to eat.

The children tell the rhyming words in the sentences. Do not write words on the board—this should be a listening exercise only.

As an extension, the teacher reads out a list of 6 or more words and the children point out all those that rhyme with a given word.

11. Alphabet Rhymes

Learning some of the alphabet rhymes from the Edward Lear *Book of Nonsense* will help young children to develop power in listening for rhyming words. Examples:

F was once a little fish	R was once a little rose
Fishy	Rosy
Wishy	Posy
Squishy	Nosy
Fishy	Rosy
In a dishy.	Blows-y, grows-y
Little fish!	Little rose.

12. Action Rhymes

This game should be played in small groups. The teacher gives a word. Each child in the group must think of a rhyming word which can be expressed in action or in wordless sounds. For example, if the teacher says, "Fun", a child will *run* a few steps. Other good words are "pump" (*jump*) and "joint" (*point*). With practice, the children learn to give the words for others to match with action.

This game may be made a little harder by asking for actions or sounds for three different rhymes to a given word. For example, if the teacher or pupil who is "It" says, "Rat" one child may meow like a cat, one may pretend to use a bat in baseball, another may pat the desk or blow out his cheeks and indicate generous curves (fat).

III. Listening for Initial Consonants

13. Pictures and Sounds

To give practice in perceiving words beginning with the same consonant sound (you might start with *m* for instance), prepare pictures of the following objects: mouse, milk, mitt, mat, man, meat, mop, match, melon, monkey, moon, mother. These may be posted on a chart or used with a flannelboard. Have the objects named and ask the pupils if they hear any similarity in the names of the objects. Later, words beginning with some other consonant sound may be pictured and the pupils asked to listen for the first sound.

14. Same and Different Beginnings

To develop auditory perception of the differences in the beginning sounds of words, conduct a listening exercise with a small group of children. Listen carefully. Be ready to tell me which word of the three does not begin like the others run-red-Tom. Continue in the same manner with the following groups of words: "time-Tom-door", "come-can-good-by", "walk-way-home", "dog-did-Jack", "put-good-go", "be-hill-home", "laughed-house-looked".

If necessary, the pupils may repeat each word as it is spoken by the teacher. This exercise is helpful as a means of discovering which pupils fails to hear differences in the initial sounds of words.

15. Going to the Market

Prepare word cards for things that can be bought at a grocery store (beans, bananas, bread, corn, cabbage, cake, peaches, pears, plums). Put one word on each card. Duplicate cards may be made. A leader is chosen to distribute several cards to each player. The teacher gives the leader a card with the word "basket". The leader says, "Who bought something that begins with the first sound of 'basket'?" Each child who has cards beginning with a *b* sound will read the cards aloud and drop them in the shopping basket the leader carries. Change leaders after each round. The next leader shows

a new card and says, "Who bought something that starts with the same sound as 'candy'?" (Refer to sounds, not to letters of the alphabet.)

16. Which is Different?

A "blend game" may be played by groups of children who need practice in discriminating between different consonant blends. Say, "I am going to say words that begin like 'bread'. If you hear a word that begins in a different way, clap your hands". Then pronounce "Brown, brook, block, brave". Consonant blends which are confused with digraphs may be used in the same manner. "The key word is chair". Which is different: cherry, shoe, chicken, chocolate?" The first time or two the game is tried, it may help to have the children repeat the words. Children may occasionally be allowed to serve as leaders.

Summary

These exercises provide many ways for pupils to practice hearing and pronouncing initial consonant sounds or for teachers to test for auditory perception of words with the same beginning sounds. Some of these are as follows:

1. Have the children repeat nursery rhymes which require the repetition of certain sounds. ("Baa, Baa, Black Sheep". Sing a Song of Sixpence".)
2. Have the pupils imitate animal sounds with repetitions. (The crow says, "Caw, caw"; the hen says, "cut-cut-a-cut"; etc.)
3. Use pictures of objects beginning with the same sound and have the children name them.
4. Develop power in spotting likenesses and differences by repeating three words, sometimes all beginning alike and sometimes with one beginning with a different sound, as in "can-ball-car".
5. Use riddles to elicit words which must begin with a given sound. For example, if the group is working on the initial *t* sound, say, "I am noisy. I help on the farm. I use gasoline I am a . . . (tractor)"

6. Use pupils' own names, objects around the room, or other concrete possibilities for a variety of word games.
7. Combine auditory and visual recognition by the use of word cards in games like "Bingo", "Supermarket", etc.
8. When children are able to write common words, use many tests and writing activities involving classification of words by the same initial consonant.

Most of the above activities for individual consonants may also be adapted for use with consonant blends at the beginnings of words.

IV. Listening for Medial and Final Consonants and Vowels

17. Final Sounds

To develop auditory perception of the consonant *k* as an ending sound, pronounce the words "make", "work", "look", "cake" and call attention to their auditory similarity. Ask the pupils to clap when they hear a word that ends with the same sound as "make" and "look", as you say, "Stop, book, get, work, Dick, pick, said, fork".

Similarly, a rapid listening drill may be given on groups of words that are alike and groups of words that are different. Direct the children to clap their hands lightly when any three words that you pronounce end with the same sound. Pronounce: "Said, and, good: at, door, do, paint, want, slip: paint, pet, at: good, up, like: good, red, and, what, has, want", etc.

18. Consonant Sounds at Different Places

If working on the consonant *t* for example, the teacher will say a word, like "top", or "bat" or "letter", and the children will tell whether they hear the *t* sound at the beginning, middle, or end of the word. Then the teacher will write the word on the board for the children to see whether they are right. As children grow more accustomed to test situations, they may be given a blank of five to ten items as follows:

1. b m c
2. b m c
3. b m c

The teacher then announces a consonant sound such as *t* or *m* and asks the children to circle on the test blank whether they hear the at the beginning (b), middle (m), or end (e) of the word. As an example, six items for the *m* sound could be: "hammer", "slam", "maple", "marker", "summer", and "column".

Listening for Vowel Sounds

Vowel sounds are complex, and variations are subtle in the English language. At the fourth-grade level (or sometimes for advanced third-grade groups) it may be necessary also to teach the marking system of the dictionary used by the pupils. Work on vowel sounds ordinarily spreads over two or three years, with opportunities for using words met in reading, for reviewing different uses of vowels, and for applying knowledge of vowels in relation to syllabication of words as an aid to their pronunciation and understanding.

Some of the steps in learning to listen for vowel sounds (to be developed over months, or even two or three school years) are as follows:

1. Identifying the vowels *a, e, i, o, u* and sometimes *y*.
2. Recognizing that the vowels may be long, short, or silent (*a* in "meat" or *e* in "lone").
3. Knowing the sounds of some of the common vowel combinations such as *ai, oo, au*.
4. Applying the rule that "a word or a part of a word that contains a vowel sound is called a syllable" by analyzing one-syllable, two-syllable, and longer polysyllabic words. (As with most language rules, there are exceptions to this one; e.g., "cradle" is a two-syllable word but the second syllable does not contain a vowel sound.)
5. Realizing that vowel sounds vary with their positions in words, as *a* before *t*, *a* in *an*, *a* in *ar*, *e* in *er*, *i* before *r*. (For example, *a* in "hand", "hall", and *e* in "herd" and "over".)

(Continued on page 16)

USING POETICAL EXPRESSIONS OF CINQUAINE FOR PHYSICS LEARNING

It can be an interesting experience for students learning physics at secondary and senior secondary levels to use the poetical expression of cinquaine especially for learning physics terminology.

It was during an in-service course in February 1992 at Mussoorie, I was told that there is an interesting physics book in which each page is sprinkled with jokes, jingles and poems. The book makes lively and popular reading for both teachers and students. Taking a cue from it, I thought of making use of cinquaine—a five line poem—to introduce the learning of physics terms to my students, immediately after the in-service course.

While using cinquaine it should be borne in mind that such an experience should be given to children once in a while, for a change, as there is nothing systematic in the use of cinquaine in learning physics. It can only be tried with different groups at different times to break monotony.

The five lines that constitute a cinquaine, should be in the following sequence:—

- (i) The first line of a cinquaine has one word only. This word generally tells the essence of the poem.
- (ii) The second line of the cinquaine has two verbs which express the activity; they tell what the poem is about.
- (iii) The third line consists of three words, all adjectives describing what is going on.
- (iv) The fourth line consists of a sentence which is the core of the poem.
- (v) The fifth line has one word only, which sums up the feeling of the poem.

After the children were told what a cinquaine is, they were given some examples of it in relation to physics terms.

The first example given to my students is given below:

Physics
Twisting, turning
Awkward, hard, exciting
Understanding matter and energy
Discipline

This example was taken from elsewhere and slightly modified by changing its third and fourth lines. In order to provide a better insight into constructing their own cinquaines, the children were given three more examples, which were poems written by me, as follows:

Light
Reflecting, refracting
Rectilinear, unseen, wavy
Makes things visible
Illuminating

Heat
Radiating, convecting
Conducted, absorbed, emitted
Produces warmth in us
Infra-red

Potential-energy
Raising, storing
Useful, convertible, mechanical
It's stored in dams
Non-conventional

One group of students was then asked to write cinquaines which were then used as quiz items on a second group. All were based on physics terms. For example:

Energy
Moving, blowing
Useful, convertible, mechanical
Blowing wind has it
Non-conventional

In this case, the students of second group were suppose to supply the term 'Kinetic Energy'. Such an exercise made the cinquaines more interesting for students.

The students found the experience of constructing cinquaines an enjoyable activity and recommended that after teaching three to four chapters, they should be allowed to review the chapters through cinquaines.

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MORE OF "MORE AND LESS"

Ranjana Nundee

'More' 'less' and 'as many as' are important concepts for the young child to understand very clearly. Young children think of the words 'more' and 'less' meaning pretty much the same thing.

To begin with I make up stories through which I talk about 'more' and 'less' and 'as many as' to develop the concepts gradually. One of my stories goes like this. A story about the 'more monster'. He is greedy and always likes to eat from a plate, basket or snack box which has 'more' eatables. He lives far, far away but has magical powers. He can smell and find food and also guess who has more.

The story goes on and it becomes more and more imaginative. The children are full of monsters by now. I let them draw and paint monsters. At snack time we keep comparing who has more biscuits and who the 'more monster' will catch.

In the mean time we begin grouping activities and introduce the words extra, match, groups etc.

Four children are called up and I give them a pencil each emphasizing 'one child-one pencil'. Does each child have a pencil? Are there any extras?

The same kind of activity is repeated on the board and flannel board using various objects-cups, and saucers, bat and balls, sweets etc. Then we start matching one to one.

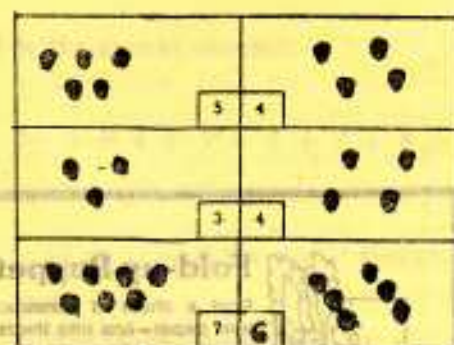
"Which group has 'more'?"

Sentences like 'the side which has extra faces will be 'more' and 'the side which has less' is less.

After this we begin arrangement sheets like those in the next figure, where the children are asked to ring 'more' and sometimes ring 'less'.

At this time I make a special 'more monster' puppet. The instructions are given at the end of this article.

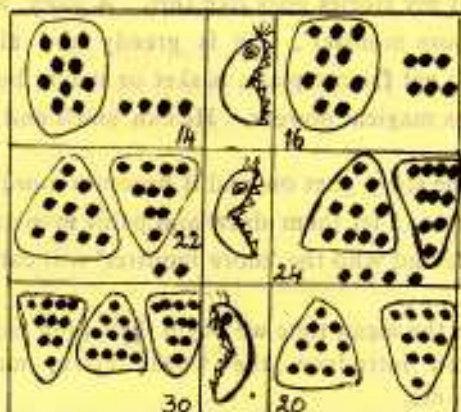
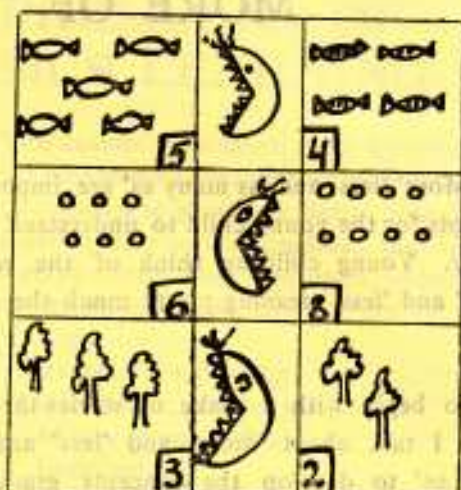
While telling stories and even when doing oral work I use this puppet. I make it a point to emphasise how greedy he is and he eats from the side which has more. He wants MORE all



the time. While matching one to one we analyse why one side has more—after we come to a decision—I ask the children which side do you think will the monster eat from?—and when they answer, I open the puppet's mouth wide and make noises. (You must be laughing but the children enjoy this most!).

The mouth wide open helps them to remember the symbols of more or less. They remember the fact that the mouth opens to the side which has 'more'. Finally we work on assignment sheets like those shown here. The pattern is repeated many times and the fun and laughter helps them to enjoy these maths sessions. We gradually proceed to more difficult activities like the second one with larger numbers.

The children slowly get over the fascination of drawing the 'more monster' face, and write only the symbols $>$ or $<$. Have fun teaching!



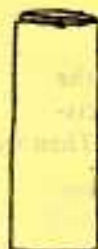
Fold-up Puppet

Fold a sheet of construction paper—first into thirds, lengthwise; then into quarters, with the top and bottom meeting in the middle. Fold again in half with the openings on the outside.

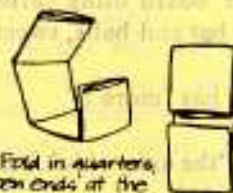
Slip your thumb and fingers into the slots to make puppet talk. See page 22 and cover photo



3. Fold in half, open ends on outside.



1. Fold in thirds, lengthwise.



2. Fold in quarters, open ends at the middle.



4. Glue on features. Slip fingers and thumb into openings.

(Reprinted with permission from Teachertalk, March '91 issue)

MATHS CLUB IDEAS

Interesting Consecutive Numbers

It is interesting to note that some numbers can be expressed as the sum of consecutive numbers, as follows:

$$6 = 1 + 2 + 3$$

$$26 = 5 + 6 + 7 + 8$$

There are some interesting observations made while dealing with consecutive numbers:

1. The sum of three consecutive counting numbers is always a multiple of 3.

$$n + (n + 1) + (n + 2) = 3n + 3 = 3(n + 1)$$

This is a multiple of three.

2. The sum of two consecutive numbers is always odd and therefore an odd number can always be expressed as the sum of two consecutive counting numbers. $n + (n + 1) = 2n + 1$, which is always odd.

3. No consecutive counting numbers add up to powers of 2.

Let us examine the following cases.

How many sets of consecutive integers add up to 45?

a. $45 = 3 \cdot 15 = 15 + 15 + 15 = 14 + 15 + 16$ (15 is the central element)

b. $45 = 15 \cdot 3 = 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + \dots$ (15 times)
 $= (-4) + (-3) + (-2) + (-1) + 0 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9$

With 3 as the central element, this is the series.

c. $45 = 5 \cdot 9 = 9 + 9 + 9 + 9 + 9 = 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11$ (9 is the central element here)

d. $45 = 9 \cdot 5 = 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5$
 $= 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9$ (5 is the central element)

5. Find out how it works for 1,45.

Work out such sums for the numbers 15, 30, 60 etc.

Saroja Sundararajan
Madras

*Teaching is a performing art and
a science without any rehearsal.*

*Effective teachers don't cover the
syllabus, they uncover it.*

A SQUARE PUZZLE

Long ago, there was a poor farmer, whose fields were in the shape of a square. Each side was one hundred paces long.

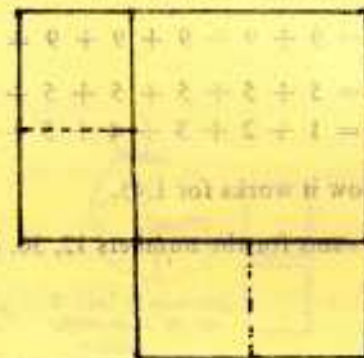
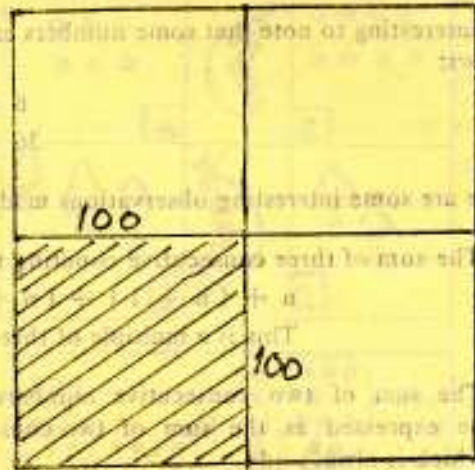
One day, he heard a knock on his door. A tired and dusty man stood outside. "I'm tired", said he, "and very hungry. Will you give me something to eat?"

The kind farmer took him in and fed him well. After his lunch, the man said, "You were good to me and it is my turn to do something for you. You did not know it, but I am your king. As a reward for your kindness, you may double the size of your field... but there is one condition. It must still remain in the shape of a square."

The farmer was very happy. He set off at once to measure his land and fence it. He doubled each side so that it became 200 paces long. What was the area of his new field? "No, no!", thought he. "This is not correct. What should I do?"

He divided his square into four small squares and added on the same amount again. However, he still could not fulfil the king's condition. Why? He tried to fix the small squares in other ways. If he completed the square, what would happen?

Can you help the farmer solve his problem?



(Continued on page 16)

HOW TO SOLVE MATHS PROBLEMS—5

Use Action Strategies

Sometimes the best strategy to use to solve a problem is to *act it out*. Children can often perceive mathematical concepts if they relate to a situation in which they are personally involved.

Manipulate Small Objects

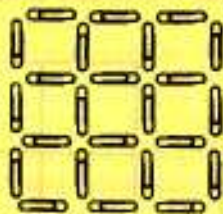
Sometimes they may not be able to act out a problem. They may not have people to play the parts. That's when manipulating, or working with, objects can be a useful strategy. They can use small objects to stand for people or things mentioned in the problem.

This works well for problems involving money. Get some coins of varied denominations and let them solve this problem.

Problem 1: How would you make up one rupee using 2 coins? 4 coins? 5 6 7 9 and finally 10 coins?

Here's another problem where manipulating objects may be the best way to solve it. Maybe you can use toothpicks, paper clips, or crayons as the objects to manipulate.

Problem 2: A square made of 24 lines forms 9 small squares. How would you leave 5 small squares by removing 4 lines? 6 lines? 7 lines? 8 lines? 9 lines?



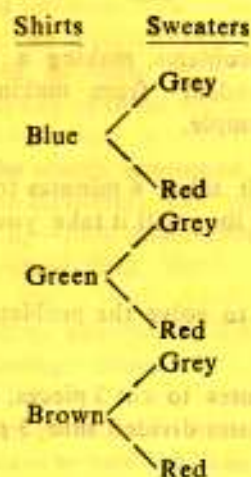
Use Action Drawings

Math problems often seem confusing. Making drawings may help to clear their

thinking. Usually when doing math, they have paper and pencil handy. So, let them learn to use the drawing strategy to help solve math problems.

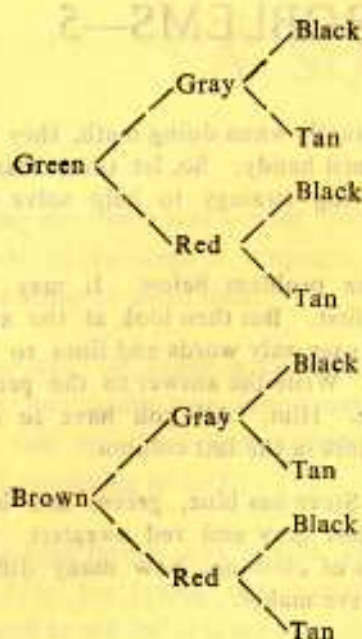
Study the problem below. It may seem confusing at first. But then look at the simple drawing. It uses only words and lines to solve the problem. Write the answer to the problem in a sentence. Hint. All you have to do is count the colors in the last column.

Problem 3: Steve has blue, green, and brown shirts. He has gray and red sweaters. With those 5 pieces of clothing, how many different outfits can Steve make?



Problem 4: Steve also has a pair of black slacks and a pair of tan slacks. If he mixes shirts, sweaters, and slacks, how many different outfits can he make?





In solving some problems, making a drawing may keep the student from making a mistake. Here's an example.

Problem 5: Suppose it takes 6 minutes to cut a log in 3 pieces. How long will it take you to cut a log in 4 pieces?

Maybe you'd try to solve the problem by thinking like this:

1. If it takes 6 minutes to cut 3 pieces, then that must be 6 minutes divided into 3 parts or $6 \div 3 = 2$.
2. That means it takes 2 minutes for each piece.
3. If it takes 2 minutes for each piece, then 4 pieces would take 4 times 2 minutes or $4 \times 2 = 8$.
4. It would take 8 minutes to cut 4 pieces.

Right? Wrong! Look at a drawing to see why it's wrong.



1. The drawing shows you cut the log 2 times, not 3, to make 3 pieces.
2. If it takes 6 minutes to make 2 cuts, then that must be 6 minutes divided into 2 parts or $6 \div 2 = 3$.
3. That means it takes 3 minutes for each cut.
4. If it takes 3 minutes for each cut, then 3 cuts would take 3 times 3 minutes or $3 \times 3 = 9$.
5. It would take 9 minutes to cut 4 pieces.

Make a drawing to prove the solution.

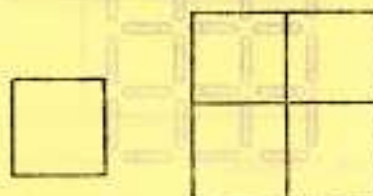
Here are some problems where acting out, manipulating objects or drawing may keep students from making mistakes. Let them write a sentence to answer each problem, be ready to act out the problem, manipulate objects, or make a drawing to prove their answers are right.

Problem 6: How many lines would you have to draw to divide a 6-inch line into 6 equal parts?

Problem 7: What's the fewest number of folds needed to fold a piece of paper into 8 equal parts?

What's the highest number of folds needed?

Problem 8: A girl uses 1 block for a square. She adds 3 blocks to the first block to make a larger square. She adds 5 more blocks for the third-size square. How many blocks does she have to add for the fourth-size square?



First

Second

To be continued

A Date With Karma

Anubha Banerjee

No. This is not about our epics. It has nothing to do with the Mahabharata or the famous 'yuddh' or Krishna or Arjuna.

I had a date with 'Karma' one day, a story written by Khushwant Singh which can be stumbled across in the 8th standard text book (Modern English). I was supposed to teach it to a classful of students who are not naturally exposed to the language.

We skimmed the story together, looking for new words. As the students called out each word I wrote it on the board. In about ten minutes this was the list we had—

inebriated	eminently	sangfroid
replenish	patronage	gait
haunches	ambled	anglicized
umpteenth	translucent	opinionated
ruminate	vizier	aggressive
preposterous	haversack	cantonment
installation	sordid	nocturnal
carnation		

Just glancing at them I knew how many were part of my passive vocabulary, and a few of them I had come across and learnt only in the 11th or 12th.

Bravely we started figuring out what each word meant.

'Patronage' came in a sentence which went like this He looked at himself with pity and patronage.

Everyone delved into their dictionaries. One boy raised his hand called out "Ma'am, it's not there in my dictionary".

"How can that be?" I asked. "Bring your dictionary here".

He brought it to me and sure enough "patron" was around, but "patronage" was hidden in a

paragraph explaining "patron". I hadn't told him, and he hadn't known before that, that "patron" was the root word of "patronage".

Well in this dictionary the meaning of "patronage" was "to patronize". That didn't lead us any closer to understanding what the word meant!

We moved to a bigger dictionary. Look for something connected to pity, I told them.

There were three sets of meanings—the first were all connected with kings and artists; the second had to do with the business world; the third lot went like this—condescension, patronize, we guessed that the third lot of words would go with "pity" but didn't still know what any of those meant.

The search continued. The very next word in the dictionary was "patronize" and we looked that up—look down upon, show condescension, encourage, help.

Ah! or Eureka! We'd finally figured out what 'patronage' meant.

But, groan, there were 22 such words! Would we have to battle with each in the same way?

That was the saga of the words. But there was more to it, the thematic content. For why ever should a story about an Indian anglicized barrister being evicted from a train be called 'Karma'? No one in that classful could connect up the two. Finally, after spending ten minutes in a guessing game, much against my natural inclination not to spoon feed, I showed them the connection. That Sir Mohan Lal, the Anglicized barrister, was finally 'punished' for looking down upon Indians. It certainly wasn't self-evident. As one bright student moaned after this 'yuddh' was over, 'Ma'am, why do we have to study such difficult stories'. Something to do with 'karma' maybe?

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DO YOU KNOW ABOUT....

Books

1. **Teacher** by Sylvia Ashton-Warner, Rs. 30/-. Bala Sahithi, 2-1-1/5 Nallakunta, Hyderabad.

A reprint of an old classic, acclaimed as a seminal work, one which radically altered the way in which we transmit knowledge to the young.

2. **Reconstruction in Education**, by Maria Montessori, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-600020.

Another reprint, Montessori, who needs no introduction, says: "The child gives us knowledge about our methods of teaching in the school. One practical thing we have learned is that because the child absorbs so unconsciously, we must put the little child in same place where he can absorb".

3. **Learn Science from Folk Toys** by Dr. Lalit Kishore. Written in Punjabi and published with a grant from the Punjab State Council for Science and Technology. Contact Dr. Lalit Kishore, Central Tibetan Schools Organization, Qutab Institutional Area, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi-110 067.

4. **Exploring An Environment** by Feisal Alkazi and others. Contact Ankur Society for Alternatives in Education, J-21 Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi-110 016.

A detailed report on a multi-disciplinary project undertaken as part of SUPW by Ankur with the school children of Delhi. The students studied various aspects of the Mehrauli area in great detail. Through this work significant attitudes and values were questioned, talked about and accepted or modified. The book explains how the project was planned and implemented, details a series of exciting ideas and activities, gives tips to the teachers and includes students' reactions and comments. Useful to teachers within and outside Delhi.

5. **Delhi: Stones And Streets** by C.H.S. Jhabvala, Ravi Dayal Publishers, Delhi, distributed by Orient Longman, Rs. 500/-.

Written by a well-known Delhi architect and teacher, this book contains fifty full-page pencil sketches by the author, ranging from palaces and stately buildings to shanty settlements, untidy streets and markets. Each sketch is accompanied by a witty, instructive text. An illustrated glossary explaining the architectural terms is included. Expensive, but a worthwhile addition to the library, especially of Delhi Schools.

Resource Materials

6. How many readers make use of the children's page of the newspapers as a source of quiz questions, activities, information? **The HINDU**, has a children's supplement on Saturday. Called Young World it gives information on science, world affairs, Indian politics, history, folklore, flora and fauna in short, simple, easily-read capsules—useful for young and old alike. Apart from this there are quizzes, riddles, crosswords and ideas for activities in science and maths.

Once a month the paper carries satellite information on weather conditions like the monsoon. There are also the weekly temperature and rainfall readings of several Indian cities.

Teachers will find in the main newspaper, interesting articles on education (Tuesday), agriculture in India (Wednesday), science and technology (Wednesday), medicine (Sunday), current affairs and topics of interest (Open Page—Tuesday) and a series titled "Know Your English" (Tuesday).

Their fortnightly magazine, **FRONTLINE**, lavishly illustrated in colour, carries articles on environmental issues regularly.

THINK ABOUT IT

Text Books in Rajasthan

—Smita Agarwal
from "People's Action"

All text books have been written keeping the urban child in mind. For instance, the example of a rhyme that I can recall is, with a picture of a man in a shirt and trousers and a woman in a sari, carrying a table fan. Now there is no concept of either "mummy" or "papa" in the village.

Another example, a chapter on crops begins with: "You may have heard the name of baajra". A statement like this to a rural child of Rajasthan who has grown up in baajra fields, is quite ridiculous. Similarly a chapter (Our Village) attempts to describe a village. This description is addressed to someone who has never seen a village, not to one who lives in it.

In the science text books, experiments call for things like stoves, ice, rubber tubes, thermos flasks, measuring jars, straws—so much so that the class V book calls for the full distillation apparatus complete with Liebig's condenser and all. And I have seen villages where even a glass tumbler would not be available.

The children would understand the process sought to be taught much better if an attempt had been made to suggest local equivalents, which are, in fact, available in plenty. But the attitude of casual indifference leaves the teacher in a fix and all he can do is read out the experiment verbally and ask the children to learn it up. Those who prepare these text books have either never seen a remote enough village or do not think it important that the book should get across to them. Here begins the process of alienation.

Education: March 1992 issue

Behaviours...

There are many psychological differences among school children.

1. Children who are shy cannot fight, have an adjusting nature, a little bit fearful: Sudheer, Jungly, Chinna Nagaraju...
2. Children who are shy, but if necessary can fight, sometimes cannot compromise, try to get balance, do hard work: Vijaya, Pedda Nagaraju...
3. Brave and hard workers: Jaya
4. Brave, courageous, intelligent, supervisor: Mastan

(Reproduced from *Education: A Bulletin for Parents and Teachers on Alternative Education*, published by Raghubabu, 3-167 Tapovan, Anantapur-4, Andhra Pradesh.)

5. Brave but mischievous: Narayana, Abdullah
6. Average, dull: Kavitha, Kamakshi, Mani
7. Average, can manage: Ramesh, Kristtaiah

If school provides necessary facilities to the children of different psychological backgrounds, then they may identify their actual field of study, develop their skills and express themselves through that form.... It is an interesting feature to observe.

Our school had created a few facilities like a small library, a simple laboratory corner, simple arts & crafts material, agriculture in the two acre farm, growing a kitchen garden, diary writing before leaving the school.... After providing these opportunities, we started to observe the interests of the children:

1. Those who naturally feel shy, selected the fields of reading, drawing, writing stories, etc., creative fields. And developed their abilities within a few months rapidly. Vijaya, Pedda Nagaraju, Chinna Nagaraju, Sudheer were among them. Though Narayana is a mischievous boy, he too has shown his interest in writing poetry, stories...
2. Two types of persons came out from the bravery group:
—Jaya & Jungly worked hard; they elected to do farm work. They were becoming skilled persons in digging pits, watering the crops...
—Mastan remained as a supervisor, just like a leader! He never initiated some manual work or contributed anything. But he became a number one creative actor among all the school children.
—Narayana, Abdulla, Ramesh—These are very quarrelsome children, they do half of the work, then leave it in the middle, disturb others, did not show any particular interest in developing their skills.
3. Finally, Mallikarjuna was a peculiar child! He cannot do hard work like Jaya, at the same time he cannot sit quietly like Sudheer! He was enthusiastic, but not able to do things properly. He neither developed his skills in creative fields nor did he do some manual work in the fields. Just like a kite or a top he used to run without clarity, without an opinion! But he is a good boy!

We experienced that, all children are intellectuals! But, every one has their own time to pick-up, and to burst into their own expression! The teacher has to wait till that moment.....

Education: November 1991 issue

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This date with *karma* made me wonder about the Reader in general. Was this barrage of vocabulary input per chapter an effective one—I mean, were the students learning any of these words or internalizing the meanings in any way? To find out if they were, I asked the same group of students to turn to a lesson they'd been 'taught' earlier and asked them to find the words which they didn't understand—the story was ironically, *The Silver Lining*. There were 22 common words which they didn't understand or didn't know how to use—ignoring, beckoned,

vitality, intimate, timidly, miniature, nodded, apologetically, overture, fascinated, gratefully, fringe, trepidation, unkempt, profuse, awkward, excursion, pursed, nonchalantly, drooping, aghast, anguish. Some of these words were difficult to puzzle out even in their context or in the sentences.

What point is there in introducing such a large number of unfamiliar words in every lesson—other than increasing the students' dependence on the teacher to help them make sense of each such story or poem. The students' minds only seem to get more befuddled and uncomfortable with the language.

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19. Short and Long Vowels

The teacher gives a type word having the short sound of *a*, such as "hat". The pupils give other words rhyming with "hat"—"rat", "cat", "mat", "sat". As the teacher writes the words on the chalkboard, the children read them. The teacher erases the initial letter and asks what is left. She erases the final letter and asks what is left, and the children give the short sound of *a*. She builds up the words again, asking the children to pronounce as she writes.

When the children recognize the short vowel sounds easily, the teacher writes on the board

type words, from the children's reading vocabulary, having long vowel sounds:

cake shine rope

The children contribute words having the long vowel sounds, and the teacher writes these on the board, under the word with the same vowel sound (the children decide where the words belong).

After the children have studied short and long vowel sounds separately, they may be asked to distinguish between them. One way to do this is to have the teacher or a leader give words alternately to members of two teams of the class. Each team scores a point for every correct response in recognizing a long or a short vowel sound.

To be continued

A SQUARE PUZZLE

(Continued from page 10)

Finally the farmer tried this. He divided his square field into triangles by drawing the diagonals. Each triangle was one-quarter of the area of the square. He found that by adding on one triangle on to each side of the square he got a diamond shape. Turned on its side, it became a square whose area was twice as much as the area of his original field.

